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Several pages of the Report are given to a discussion of the civil cases now pending, particularly to those where the interpretation of the word "line" is in question. Much difficulty has been occasioned by the interpretation which the courts have given this word, and Congress is asked to adopt the interpretation of the commission, *i. e.*, a "physical line," not a "business arrangement." An amendment in respect to proceedings to enforce the lawful orders of the Commission is again asked for. The question of pooling which received so much attention in the last report is not mentioned in this one.

The statistics collated from the reports which the roads are required to make to the Commission are valuable in proportion to the promptness with which they can be issued. Many of the roads are very dilatory. Some do not send in the reports till almost a year after the time fixed. An amendment is therefore asked fixing a cumulative penalty for delay.

The suggestion which marks the most distinct advance is perhaps the one calling for authority to fix minimum as well as maximum rates. The act was originally framed to protect the shippers against the railways. Now it is recognized that railways need protection against one another.

W. H.

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*The Union Pacific Railway : A Study in Railway Politics, History and Economics.* By JOHN P. DAVIS, A.M. Chicago : S. C. Griggs & Co., 1894. 8vo. pp. 247. (With maps.)

THE first one hundred pages of Mr. Davis's book contain the history of the Pacific Railway enterprise prior to the passage of the Act of 1862. The agitation before the people, beginning with the first indefinite proposal for a road in 1832, is described, year by year, and the congressional struggle, session by session. Citations from the magazines and newspapers of the day, and from the voluminous congressional debates are given in profusion. A dreary waste of materials has been minutely surveyed to get together this narrative, and the work has been well done. But this is ancient history, and interesting only as such, and it is a serious question whether the matter is important enough to warrant such a presentation.

In the next chapter, an exposition of the charter Acts of 1862 and 1864, there is a curious mistake. The Act of 1862 provided that the

Central Pacific should build from San Francisco to the eastern boundary of California, and if the road from the East had not yet reached that point the western one might continue eastward on the same terms given to the Union Pacific, receiving the subsidy at the completion of each section of a specified length. This provision Mr. Davis lays down correctly, and then, two pages later, says that the subsidy for the main line of the Union Pacific, *i. e.*, from the one hundredth meridian westward, could not be paid until the line from that point to Omaha had been completed—an evident contradiction. Moreover, on page 123, he quotes verbatim the provision in the Act of 1864 which he had on page 109 attributed to the Act of 1862. This clause, which does not appear in the earlier Act, was inserted in the later one as a safeguard against the building of the system in such a way that St. Louis, through Kansas City, should be practically the connecting point with the eastern railway net, instead of giving that advantage to Chicago. Another clause, limiting the eastern building of the Central Pacific to a point one hundred and fifty miles east of the California state line, was also inserted in the Act of 1864, thus preventing the conflict which otherwise might have arisen.

This chapter contains also a misstatement concerning one of the contracts which Vice-President Durant made with L. B. Boomer, of Chicago, for building a part of the Union Pacific line. Mr. Davis says that Boomer was “afterward declared to have enjoyed existence only in Durant’s fertile imagination.” I can recall no place where such a statement is made, although Oliver Ames said that the Boomer *contract* was “a secret arrangement,” “a bogus thing of Dr. Durant’s,” and that “Boomer was a man of no responsibility.” (Testimony before the Wilson Committee, p. 285). This is a somewhat different matter.

In this same chapter one finds also the assertion which is frequently made, that while the Ames faction wished to build the road and make money out of running it in subsequent years, the Durant party thought that the enterprise would be a business failure, and were, therefore, anxious to make the greatest sum possible out of the construction contracts. Does the evidence bear out this conclusion? Durant went into the project at its conception, carried it on his individual shoulders to a certain point, there had to give place to a new man. Whoever that man had been he probably would have excited the personal jealousy of Durant. Durant and Ames were not widely different in their

methods, and their disputes seem to have been of a personal nature, rather than due, as is commonly said, to the different ways of considering the project. But one cannot dogmatize on this point.

A chapter of twenty-seven pages is devoted to the building of the Union Pacific. The bulk of this space is taken up with a picturesque description of the town at "the end of the road," the story of a fight with the Indians, a poem of Bret Harte's. Important facts concerning the construction period are slighted. This chapter contains also a discussion of one of the disputes with the government over the date fixed for the completion of the road. As Mr. Davis devotes a subsequent chapter to legal matters it would seem that this subject might better have been treated there.

The chapter devoted to the legal aspects of the undertaking recounts the decisions of the United States Supreme Court in cases pertaining to the Pacific Railways, and deals with the only phase of the entire subject which had previously been adequately treated.

The last chapter gives some facts concerning the present status of the debts of the different Pacific Railways, and makes references to the proposed plans of settlement with the Government. Here is found a meager account of the consolidation which occurred in 1880. Of it Mr. Davis says that the terms were onerous to the Union Pacific. On the contrary, consolidation had long been desired by both the Kansas Pacific and the Union Pacific parties, and at the particular time when it was effected it was the Union Pacific, and not the Kansas Pacific, which was in great trepidation lest the proposed scheme should fall through.

Of the whole book only seventy pages (the chapter on the construction period, the one on the Credit Mobilier and the closing note of three pages on the present receivership and the probable reorganization) pertain to the Union Pacific as distinguished from the rest of the half-dozen roads provided for in the charter acts. It would therefore seem that the book has been misnamed. It might more appropriately have been called "The First Railway to the Pacific."

There are two sets of readers whom this book will not satisfy—first, those who wish to determine how the Government should deal with the company; and, secondly, investors. Such readers want to know the exact financial status of the company and its probable ability to meet its obligations in the future. This can be known only by a careful analysis of the accounts of the road, and to make this understanding complete this analysis must cover the whole period of the

road's existence. The policy of the various owners of the road must be detailed, and the effect of each policy upon the finances of the road must be pointed out. Really important phases of the Union Pacific history Mr. Davis has slighted; questions of finances he has practically ignored. The perspective is distorted.

HENRY K. WHITE.

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*Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Gas and Electric Light Commissioners of Massachusetts, 1892*, 8vo. pp. 288; and *Report of a Committee to Investigate Charges against Certain Gas Companies under an Order adopted by the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, March 28, 1893, with the Evidence and Arguments of Counsel*. 8vo. pp. clix + 578.

THESE two *Reports* are valuable additions to the literature of the subject treated. Hitherto the Massachusetts Board has given to the world no information on the actual cost of manufacture of gas in the several cities of the state. The ostensible reason for not giving such information has been that the Board could not rely upon any returns made by the companies; but there seems to have been also a hesitancy about revealing too much of the early history of the Board, lest it array against itself too many powerful interests. In the report for 1892, however, appears the total cost, aside from interest and dividends, in each of the sixty-eight gas companies of the State. Even now no such itemized statement of costs is given to the public as should be given. The defense made by the Board for refusing to print this information, or even to reveal it upon inquiry at the office to such litigants as cities suing for reductions in price of gas, is that the Board is not yet sure that the returns sent in by the companies regarding items of expense properly classify such items. No attempt seems as yet to have been made by the commissioners to determine whether or not the returns regarding the capitalization of the companies are correct, although the present law provides that no new stock or bonds be issued except through sales in open market for actual value put into the plant. The commissioners declare that they have neither the time nor the engineering and clerical assistance necessary to do all the work contemplated in the creation of the Board; they have neither time nor power to right all monopolistic abuses. Friends of the Board declare, moreover, that politics have in some